



o the Supreme Authority of  
England, The Commons assembled in  
PARLIAMENT.

the humble Petition of divers wel-affected Persons of the  
Cities of London and Westminster, the Borrough of  
Southwark, Hamblets, and places Adjacent.

the behalf of Leivt. Col. *John Lilburn*, Mr *William Walwyn*, Mr  
*Thomas Prince*, and Mr *Richard Overton*, now Prisoners in the  
Tower.

*Sheweth,*

**T**HAT if you shall seriously lay to heart, how dear and pre-  
cious the Liberties of England (contained in the Petition  
of Right) have alwayes been to the People of this Nation;  
and how much Blood and Treasure, royl and misery they  
have cost, to purchase and recover; we cannot see, why  
you should deem it the least presumption in us, To desire (as we have  
be in our late Petitions) That the benefit thereof in every Circum-  
stance might be made good unto our said Friends: And that all Mar-  
Force or Prerogative Restraint upon them (being expressly contrary  
those our Rights) might be taken off.

And though we have been so unhappy as not to prevail with you, to  
deliver them from under those many Prepossessions and prejudgings  
under which they are, and to leave them to the ordinary legal proceed-  
ings (due to the worst of men) yet are we very confident, That there  
nothing more properly appertaineth to the care of Parliaments, then  
maintain inviolable those Fundamental securities of our lives, limbs,  
erties, and estates, without which we should be ever lyable (as these  
Friends, and six other substantial Citizens since have been) to be  
chased out of our beds and houses at all hours, and to have our Wives,  
Children, and Families continually affrighted and terrified by Souldiers,  
in which we know no greater slavery.

And cannot but be extremely astonished, That this should be the  
cause and return of the many dangers and miseries we have undergone.

to recover the Supreme Authority from those prejudices of Negative Voves in King or Lords, to reduce the same in o<sup>r</sup> his House Little (as known) did we imagine, Those extraordinary actions against open known enemies would ever have bin practised against friends, so enim in suffering and acting for freedom of Parliament and Common-weal and less could we conceive, that all those fair Promises, Protestations, Declarations, and Remonstrances of Parliament and Army would have ended in so contrary an effect; as to own and justify the violent Hostile seizure, and Prerogative proceedings, and imprisonment of the said friends by the Council of State?

Which with other Circumstances accompanying, doth still enforce to believe, That you have been surprized by some evil, but painful influence into a misapprehension of some great dangers intended our friends, and hath thereupon been transported into the owning such proceedings, as are not the natural issues of this Honourable House, which we shall be very glad to have cause to be confirmed in, as knowing any thing of more advantage to the good of the Nation, to the honour of the Supreme Council, which hath caused us to adhere and own the same, even in the highest notion of the Supreme Authority, notwithstanding all Opposition or Arguments to the contrary, we have passed over years of sufferings and strange alterations, rather than this rye or bond of Government should be so much as supposed to be dissolved; so little have we, or our said friends deserved to be aspersed as introducers of Anarchy and Confusion, to be Levellers, Leisures, Authors of all the present miseries and distractions.

And doth justly give occasion for you to suspect the ends of that with so much Extreme aspersed and prosecute their good Names, Lives, and Liberties; and with impartial judgment, to enquire into the cause of this their hatred, and which you may the rather be induced unto by reason of those many thousands of your cordial friends appearing daily at your Doors with Petitions in their behalf, expressing and doubtfull confidence of their Integrity to you and the Common-weal notwithstanding all pre-judgings or aspersions to the contrary.

And upon an exact scrutiny and search therein, we verily believe you will find, That they are hated only for perpetually putting their Adversaries in mind of those many promises and Engagements made good to the Nation: and for endeavouring to have the Common-weal Governed by Law and Reason, and not by the Sword; And for that we have proposed an end to this Parliament, and that a new and equal representative (with due caution to keep Enemies from being Members) might be so speedily Chosen, as without interval, might take place immediately upon the dissolution of this Honourable House; a thing which themselves have for these two years acknowledged to be the most inalienable essential Right of the people, and which it is verily thought

they have declined, as supposing they should not be so absolute in power then as now.

Nor do we believe there is any other material thing in difference between them; and which yet may be cause enough to persons so great in Power, and accustomed to so distinct, absolute, and arbitrary proceedings; not only towards such persons as our Friends, but over this Honorable House itself, Excluding and admiring whom they have pleased: Sometimes filling the remaining part, The shadow of a Parliament, a mock Parliament, with other like expressions; and then again to serve occasion, and promote their Interest, owning it as the Supreme Authority: The danger whereof to the Liberties of the Nation, being in great measure discovered by our Friends and Others, in their Serious Apprehensions, delivered to this House the 26. of February last; and for remedy thereof, a new Representative being proposed and insisted upon, as a thing essentially necessary to preserve the Common wealth from their absolute Domination: Nothing now seems satisfactory for this Faithfulness in our Friends, but the pains due for Treason; All are encouraged that Petition against them, all discourtenanced and terrified that have Petitioned for them; All aspersions let loose at them, Spies and Intelligences put upon them, and sent purposely to betray and ensnare them in their Discourses, and to pick matter of accusation from their words: The grossest falsehoods are believed, whilst Truth spoken in their Defence is not credited, or not regarded: So that they are as far as Policy can prevail, marked out for immediate Destruction; and all this, for nothing in effect, but proposing and insisting for a speedy new and equally chosen Parliament, and thereby to reduce the Military Power within its due Place and Limits.

And if this now be so hainous a crime, what is become of the Liberties and Freedoms of the Common-wealth? Which we entreat you in most especial manner at this time to have regard unto; and that you will preserve our said Friends with all your might, from the violent Prosecution of their Adversaries, and speedily deliver them out of their Irerogative Illegal Imprisonments, with ample Reparations from those who were the immediate Authors thereof, and of their Hostile Seizure.

And then if ought shall be laid to their Charge, as an offence against any Law made before the fact pretended, that they may be proceeded against in an ordinary way, and in all respect, be allowed the benefit of the Petition of Right: Or, since the difference betwixt them and their adversaries are of that nature as they are, and so great a disparity in their power, That you would be pleased to accept of security from us, for their appearance at all times; Suspend all proceedings thereupon; and immediately (as is desired by all unbuffed ingenuous People, for other weighry reasons) provide for Election and Meeting of a New and Equal Representative, that may be more absolute and free to judge



in cases and actions of this nature; and unto whom possibly, the Military Power will be willingly subordinate; and consequently, their adventures under the power of the Common Law (which is now under force) equally with our friends, and answerable for what they have said or done, as well as others, which now being possessed with so much Military Power, they are not.

These things we could have more plainly expressed, but that we judge it not profitable for the Common-wealth, to look back further into differences of this nature, that have fallen out betwixt your cordial Friends, wishing our meanings could be understood without so much as pointing at them; and desiring with all our hearts, that all things past with all sorts of men who have acted in your behalf, might for ever be buried in oblivion: That so this Honorable House might be yet so happy, as to deliver up the Publike Affairs of the Nation in Peace and Tranquility, into the hands of a New Representative; and which would exceedingly content all well minded people, and honour you to all Posterity,

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